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Rajendra babu's letter about

Pros. Serial Nos. Noakhali 13-11-1946

Report of swimmers' Eucheita to Dattapara and Khalpara 31-10-46

Subject.

Cr. to D.L. 25-7-1947.

2 — 21-6-1948 — file.

Previous References.

Later References.

8-97 (Unbleached).

Returned with thanks on
behalf of Pandit Jawaharlal
Nehru.

Sardar Patel
[Tara Singh]

Patna
the 13th Nov, 1946.

My dear Vallabh bhai.

Dr Shyama Prasad Mukerji has come here to see how things are going on here. He says things have not become normal in Noakhali and Tippera even now. He has given me copies of two reports by two officers who had been deputed by the Government of Bengal to inquire into the happenings there. The reports are not complete but appear to be only parts of what they have submitted to the Government. They are by officers of the I.C.S. senior in service. I am sending them to you by messenger lest they might get lost in transit. He has managed to get these copies somehow. I did not inquire how he got them. You can make such use of them as you think proper and can even show them to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. They falsify all that the Government of Bengal and the Governor have been so far saying except that the number of deaths reported from there was much exagge-

the viceroy. if he desires, may privately send for copies of reports from the Bengal Government.

Khawaja Mushtaq Ahmad is an officer of the Information Department, the Government of India now posted in Calcutta as Dy Information officer of Govt of India. The Bengal Government want his services to be lent to them so that he might serve as their Chief of the Information Department. They want him because, although in Govt service, he carries on propaganda ~~against~~ for the Congress. and if he becomes the Chief of the Department then God knows there will suffer much at his hands. Dr. Mookerji wants that the Government of India should not allow his services to be transferred to Bengal, as asked for, and that he should be transferred to some office outside Bengal and a neutral person who is a non-Hindu and a non-Muslim be sent to ~~Bengal~~ Calcutta. Such a person is said to be one Mr Douglas who is in Delhi now. As he has especially requested me to pass this on to you I am doing so. for such action as you consider proper.

I am now free today and have taken my normal diet. I could start on Saturday but as the death of Kasturbai's wife falls on Monday I propose to start after it is over on Tuesday.

There have been no incidents reported during the last three days or more and things appear to be quiet now, although there is still panic. As I have written to you the chief problem is now of finding and helping the refugees whose numbers are now something like 70,000 in several camps at various places. Another problem which is causing anxiety to the Government is how to deal with the large influx of volunteers who are coming daily from different places to help the refugees. Some of these have uniforms resembling military uniforms. This presence is causing alarm among Hindus who fear that they may any day create trouble. The Government have issued two ordinances, one of them prohibiting the wearing of uniforms etc and requiring registration of volunteers. They have not prohibited their entry or armed their enlistment.

You must have seen in the Press a statement issued by the members of the League under the leadership of Mr Nazimuddin who visited Patna when Jawaharlalji was there and had discussions with him and the Prime Minister. Whatever the Prime Minister and Jawaharlalji said in the course of discussion

has been so disturbed as to make it appear that the P.M. admitted that his Govt was incapable and unable to tackle with the situation and that it was only after Sir Nazimuddin had met him and General Boucher in conference that the plan for military action was laid down and any effective action taken. The fact is that all that is reported as the plan of military action & other steps decided in that conference then taken was as a matter of fact reported by General Boucher as the plan he had directed the military officers to take before Sir Nazimuddin arrived here. I arrived here on the afternoon of the 5th and attended a conference on the same evening at which C Jawaharlal the Minister, the Defence minister, some other Ministers and the IG of Police were present, and it was on the evening of the 5th that General Boucher explained his plan to us which was the same as that published by the Royal members as having been made after Sir Nazimuddin's arrival which took place on the 6th. I do not know when Sir Nazimuddin had a conference with the General as I had gone away to villages after just seeing him for a half minute on the noon of the 6th when he came in & Mr C. Jawaharlal and I left for Bihar shortly. I have asked the ministry to reply to the communique.

Panditji in some of his speeches said that there would be shooting and even bombing, if the riots did not stop. This has caused much resentment among Hindus who say that he did not do anything of the sort in Bengal but he found it easy to say so in Bihar because it was Hindus who were attacked. There was shooting & military. Personally I do not think that the troops have exceeded the necessities of the situation, although there are serious allegations from some places against them. It may be that soldiers in some places may have gone amuck but on the whole my feeling is that they have not as a policy done more than what was required. Shooting of large numbers — some 250 according to Panditji to himself — although this number is spread over a large area and covers many incidents — following upon his declaration in public meetings has created much resentment and I am sorry at a meeting some Congressmen misbehaved towards him. I did not tell him all this as I was away and not aware of it. I came to Patna and fell ill and could not speak to Panditji. I have come to hear much since then.

Horrible things have happened but fortunately there is quiet now. We are still sitting on a volcano & and there may be an eruption anywhere any day, particularly

as a result of happenings elsewhere which are being published in detail in the Press and of provocative pronouncements on behalf of which there is no lack. Let us hope that things will remain quiet now.

Yours affly
Rajendra Prasad

Calcutta.
6.11.46

My dear Martyn,

While I was on tour in Noakhali I had hoped to be able to send Govt. a wireless flash as frequently as possible and a daily report by post. The only one of the four affected Thanas which had a wireless set was Ramgunge. When I arrived these I found it was out of order. The following day it was repaired but could not send out any messages as the receiving ends were busy in connection with H.E.the Viceroy's tour. On the third day the apparatus again went out of order. It was therefore not possible to send any wireless message after I had left Noakhali proper.

As regards reports by post, the last one I sent was from Raypur On arrival at Raypur I found the postal service had stopped functioning so nothing more could be sent from there. There did not seem much point in sending anything by ordinary post from Ramgunge, as the time taken for a letter to reach Calcutta would, I was told, practically coincide with my own return here.

My reports by post were in the form of daily tour diaries, I continued to maintain these until the last day, and send herewith those which continue from the last one despatched by me.

Yours sincerely,
Sd /- R. Gupta.

P.D.Martyn, Esq., I.C.S.

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1-11-46. Left the dak bungalow at 8 a.m. and visited village Dayanatpur about one mile away. Every Hindu house has been gutted except those of a few families of napits. These people residing so close to the thana are in such a state of terror still that they are reluctant to talk about what they have suffered as a result of looting. Only when they were able to be closeted alone with me I did a few of them talk. The quarters of a Hindu constable of the thana who was residing there with his family is among the gutted houses within 200 yards of the thana. Returned to the dak bungalow at 9-30 a.m. had a quick bath and some breakfast and left Raypur by boat for Rajgunje at 10-30 a.m.

As I got into boat I found a police launch from Chandpur anchored on the river. I went on board and found Mr. Delauney Addl. S.P.(?) of Tippera there. I gave him a brief account of the affairs prevailing in the village, but could not stay long as I wanted to reach Ramgunje before dark. He was making arrangements to evacuate some people who have been virtually captives in this place. Gave him a letter for Simpson whom he could be meeting in the evening.

On the way to Ramgunje visited village Keora. The same tale here. About 90% of the houses destroyed by fire, all houses looted mass conversions. The local Hindu populace wanted arrangements made for them to evacuate in a body. I gave them such assurance as I could advising them to stick it out for some days by which time conditions were expected to be better.

Continued on my journey, walking the last 3 miles on foot, and reached Ramgunje at 5 P.M. Met the Khas mahal officer Mr. Gomez, Subdeputy Collector, who has been placed in charge of the relief camp here. There are 9000 refugees in Ramgunje itself at present and 6000 more from neighbouring villages drew their rations from here. Mr. Gomez seems to be doing a thoroughly efficiently job, and it quite untiring. His main difficulty is irregular supply of rations. For the last two days the stock of rations was reduced literally to nil. Today some atta only has arrived. Stocks of rice and atta are however on the way and should be here tomorrow.

The positinn regarding medical supplies is also very acute at this relief camp. The only Government organisation is the ordinary charitable dispensary which has always been here. It has received no stock of medicines

to deal with this emergency. The result is that it has got very little of anything. The R.W.A.C. has three volunteer doctors working here. They have set up a sort of hospital. They are now in difficulties because the stock of medicines they brought with them is nearly exhausted and fresh supplies from their centre at Chandpur have not yet arrived. It is high time that the Govt. Medical Department did something here.

Left the dak bungalow at 5-20 p.m. and walked to village Nandanpur about one and half miles from Ramgunje. This village has suffered very severely at the hands of the mob. Literally every Hindu house has been destroyed. Some fairly well to do people used to live here. There were several one storeyed pukka houses. All these also have been severely damaged by fire. Returned to dak bungalow at dusk. Went to thana and with the help of the officers there and the K.M.O prepared a tour programme for tomorrow.

R.Gupta
1.11.46

2.11.46 Babu Lakhi Majumdar, the 80 year old zemindar of Panchagaon came to the dak bungalow to see me at 9 a.m. His house as also the houses of other Hindus at Panchgaon were looted and set on fire. He was taken to a mosque and converted. Thereafter he was given shelter in the house of a friendly Muslim for a couple of days until the extreme tension abated somewhat. He then returned to his own house and has stayed there until yesterday although the members of the family left long ago. No one was killed. He wept bitterly before me saying he had lost everything he had possessed. He also alleged that the S.P.one inspector, one S.I and some constables were at Panchgaon at the time of looting and did nothing. I had intended to visit Panchgaon today among other places but having met Lakhi Babu gave up the idea.

Left the dak bungalow at 9-45 a.m. on foot with an escort of 9 armed constables. S.I.Satish Chakraborty who is said to know the area well come as guide. Arrived at Lamchar at 11 a.m. Visited the relief camp. This is a predominantly Hindu village- I am told one of the few such in Noakhali district and I found no case of arson and looting here. I was told that the inhabitants as soon as they first apprehended trouble formed themselves into village defence parties etc. and met the hooligans on the outskirts of the village.

and repulsed them. The mob then moved on to seek easier prey. About 2000 thousand refugees are served by this relief camp. Their urgent need is a doctor. I shall inform the R.W.A.C. at Ramgunje to send one if possible (This has been done) .

Walked on to Karpara. The target of attack here was the house of Babu Rajendra Roy, President of the Noakhali Bar Association. The mob stormed and looted the house and set fire to it. At present it looks as if it has received a direct hit from an h.e. bomb. Rajen Babu and some others were murdered. Although originally fantastic figures of death roll were given I gather that the total number of deaths here were below 20. None of the women folk of the house were killed. They we were later removed from here by the Hon'ble Mr. Gofran, and are now in Calcutta. In Karpara besides Rajen Babu's house not many others were burnt. Possibly the mob was held up so long here that it did not have time to mop up the Hindu section of the village thoroughly.

Walked on to Sahapur bazar. This is said to be the spot where the first incident in these disturbances took place. The Hindu shops in the bazar were looted and some were burnt. When we visited it today the only human being we could find was a post man who had locked himself up in the local p.o. There was not another soul in sight and all the shops were closed. As some of the doors were closed from inside I dare say there were people inside.

From Sahapur walked via Kachua to Dasgharia. Crossed the khal by bamboo bridge and walking through the bazar - absolutely deserted like the Sahapur bazar - reached the house of a big local merchant which was looted and gutted. Several other Hindu houses in the village were also burnt down, altogether about 50% of the total number of houses. Those spared were maily ones belonging to very poor people. The great majority ofthe houses of well to do persons were set fire to.

Left Dasgharia at about 2-30 p.m. and as we were walking through the bazar towards the bamboo bridge one of the constables noticed that the rear side of a mosque, a mat wall corrugated roof structure was on fire. The state of the fire indicated that it had been lighted a few minutes earlier. I immediately ordered the constables to put the fire out as otherwise the whole bazar might have been burnt down. Some of us also ran towards the back of the mosque, to the water's edge, to see if we could spot anyone

who might have done this. We at once saw two men, clad in lungis, move out on to the D.B.road from the waters of the khal and run towards the east. One of them disappeared. The other stood a long distance away shouting police shalako maro etc.

Before the fire had been quite extinguished some local Hindus came running up and saying that a large mob shouting slogans had gathered on the south side of the village and were advancing. The constables took pp their position on the only open plot of land in front of a school (?). Frequently the head of the mob emerged from the forest of supari trees on the opposite side of the open plot. The S.I and I shouted out to them that if they advanced any further we would shoot. They came on brandishing their weapons daos, lathis, tetas etc but no fire arms as far as I could see - and under my orders the police fired several rounds whereupon the mob fled back in the jungle. In the mean time, the Hindu inhabitants of the village, whom I had found in a very panicky condition even before any of these incidents took place, in a body began to leave their houses with their women and children and such luggage as they could carry announcing that it would be unsafe for them to remain there tonight and they would accompany us to Ramgunje. Altogether about 125 such persons started back with us,75% being women and children. All were on foot.

As we approached the junction of two D.B. Roads at Kachua we could see a large mob gathered on the Dutta para road mainly in the vicinity of the bridge. Their numbers were augmented every minute by numbers of men who were coming in on boats from the direction of Dasgharia as also from the west. We found the mob had erected a sort of barricade of sheets of corrugated iron, pieces of furnuture, planks etc blocking the mouth of the road on which we were. The constables had no difficulty in knocking down this obstruction. Then, as we reached the junction of the two roads the mob began advancing towards us from the direction of the bridge. I noticed that those in the front ranks carried sheets of corrugated iron which they held in front of themselves as shields. They were shouting the usual slogans and carried weapons such as the mob at Dasgharia had carried. Some of them were blowing whistles like police whistles. I tried to call out a warning to them but in the prevailing ---- It was quite useless excepting anyone to listen to me. When I realised that the mob had no intention of halting or dispersing I ordered the police to open fire. After some rounds the crowds

thexfm broke and fled.

It was now about 4-30 p.m. I realised the imperative need of getting my force and the refugees into Ramgunje before dark. I instead therefore of waitint to look for casualties we immediately started along the road to Ramgunje. By this time a large mob had collected behind us, on the Sonaimuri road by which we had come from Dasgharia, and this began to advance towards us shouting and brandishing their weapons. As our party was going from this I had hoped that if we continued on our journey they would not bother to follow, but it was soon apparent that they had every intention of following. ~~They were led by a man carrying a small~~ corrugated iron sheet as shield and waving what looked like a spear. He was repeatedly inciting those behind him to attack us. After shouting out some warnings in vain, I ordered the police to open fire. Several rounds were fired and the mob then dispersed. Arrived at Rajgunje with out further incident at dusk. Wrote out a report of the incident and sent it to the D.M.by post, the wireless being out of order. Also sent him a telegram giving a brief account.

Altogether 21 rounds rifle ammunition and one of revolver ammunition were fired on the three occasions. The casualties are very difficult to estimate because some of them were seen being carried away by the crowd, others fell and jumped into water logged paddy fields or the khal, and in any case owing to the need for reaching Rajgunje before dark there was no time to look round trying to pick up dead or woulded. If I can hazard a guess the number of dead will be more than 7 or 8, and of wounded more than a dozen.

The total distance travelled today by me and my escort was about 18 miles, all of it on foot. Halted at the dak bungalow.

Sd/-R.Gupta
2.11.46.

3-11-46 Left the dak bungalow at 9 a.m. on foot and walked to Chandipur about 4½ miles south west of Rajgunje, This village suffered severe damage during the disturbances and 90% of the Hindu houses were destroyed by fire. These as well as the houses not set fire to were all thoroughly looted. A relief camp has been established here, from which

some 2000 refugees residing in the camp and in beighbouring villages drew their rations. They were badly in need of a doctor. A young doctor of the R.W.A.C. accompanied me and attended to the patients. The R.W.A.C hope to establish a medical unit here. 90% of the cases are of malaria and dysentery. From Chandipur walked to Srirampur and back to Ramgunje through village bansgharia. At Srirampur about 70% of the Hindu houses have suffered from arson and 95% from looting. At bansgharia the number of arson cases was few possibly because of its proximity to the thana. Returned to the dak bungalow at 1 p.m.

At 3 P.M. attended a conference at the thana with the Addl. S.P. Mr. Chitham and two officers of Rajputs, as well as Lt. Alton of the Gurkha unit stationed at Ramgunje. It appears that some of those wounded in yesterday's firing went to Duttapara where a detachment of the Rajputs is stationed. They and other villages of the area where the trouble took place made fantastic allegations such as that the police party had looted Sahapur bazar and desecrated a mosque at Kachua. The police party in question was my escort and I was with them the w whole time. These allegations were absolutely false, made simply in order to trump up a case against the police. After the departure of the Addl. S.P. and the Rajputa went over to see Lt. Alton. Stayed to dinner with him . Discussed the local situation with him. Found he had a very thorough knowledge of everything that was going on. Halted the night at the dak bungalow.

4.11.46 Left Ramgunje by boat at 11 p.m. and reached Hajiganj at 4 P.m. and proceeded to Chandpur by train.

Sd/- R. Gupta.
4.11.46.

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From

Calcutta - 7th Octr. 1946.

[illegible]son, M.A., I.C.S.,
Special Officer, Home Department,

To

The Additional Secretary to the Govt. of Bengal,
Home Department.

Sir,

I have the honour to submit the following report on enquiries made by me in the district of Noakhali into the allegations made in the press as to the incidents occurring there, and as to the extent of damage caused by arson and looting, and abductions of women, forced marriages and forced conversions during the disturbances of October.

2. Duration of visit. I left Calcutta by aeroplane during the afternoon of the 4th November, 1946. I decided that no thorough enquiry could be made unless I stayed in the district for at least three months, and as time was the essence of my task, any extension of visit by a week or ten days would have served no useful purpose. It was impossible to visit every village where damage had occurred. Communications are difficult in the extreme; it is necessary to travel by country boat at one or two miles an hour, there is water everywhere and most of the time available each day is spent in transit and not in making actual enquiries and viewing damage. A thorough and detailed investigation would require the services of a band of officers, working from morning to evening each day over an interval of time.

3. Sources of information. Up to now, no investigation has been made by district authorities. The affected areas, that is villages, have not been visited by civil officers and the police are too busily employed in maintaining order, recording informations, making arrests and so forth. I was therefore greatly at a disadvantage from the outset, for it was difficult to know where to begin. The information I have furnished is based on personal observation and enquiry at those villages as I was able to visit, statements obtained from refugees, information given to me by such persons as Mr. Paul Delauney as to visits made by him to villages, facts collected on my behalf by the District Intelligence Officer and information given to me by Mr.D.M.Ghosh,

Sub-D ty Collector, employed on relief work, who had himself visited tain areas and collected figures. Finally, I obtained from ... thana and from the Superintendent of Police statements as to villages in respect of which first information had been lodged.

4. I submitted from Chandpur and Faridganj reports by wireless and by post or special messenger. Unfortunately, some of the wireless reports were in consequence of misunderstanding delayed at Chandpur at the headquarters of the 161st Brigade. My reports set out figures of cases of arson, conversion, abduction, murder and rape.

5. Explanation. - It was manifestly impossible for me to examine every convert and every woman temporarily abducted or raped. The best I could do was to interrogate those persons I found in villages and to accept, in the case of villages not visited by me, the statements of those who furnished me with information. I desire tomake it clear that so far as these matters are concerned - particularly abductions - my figures are baded on heresay. I found it particularly difficult to obtain information regarding women. Villagers were disinclined to speak of abduction or rape. On the other hand, information as to forcible conversion was readily supplied and in a large number of instances I was shown the caps which the "converted" were forced to wear in token of their embracing Islam. I ascertained that, in some cases, Hindus, whose womanfolk had been temporarily restrained, volunteered to embrace Islam in order to effect their release, but the result of my enquiries suggests that people were compelled to become "converts" under threats of death and other harm. I found instances of homesteads still standing and untouched where the owners had volunteered to become Muslims in order to save their property, their families and themselves. In my reports, I have made but little mention of looting. There can be no doubt that looting was on a very wide scale and that even in cases where homesteads were not destroyed by fire, they had been thoroughly and efficiently looted.

6. Destruction by fire - There can be no doubt whetever that in the Faridgang and Chandpur thana areas, destruction by fire was on a wide scale. I was appalled by what I saw in such villages as Paikpara, Haemchar. It is however, not enough to speak of merely two villages by name. In all the affected villages, the scenes of wreckage cannot be adequately described. Large homesteads have ceased to exist and loss of property has been very considerable. No description of the condition of Haemchar Bazar can be sufficiently vivid; it must be visited to be appreciated. The damage in the Hajiganj thana area is on a considerably smaller scale.

7. Morale - Morale in the affected areas of Faridgang and Chandpur is very low. Everywhere I went, the few remaining villagers (I speak of Hindus) were confused and terrified. The common demand was for military protection and the prevailing tendency was to leave as quickly as possible for Chandpur, Comilla and beyond. Those still in the villages refused to consider bringing back their families from refugee centres. I was asked, repeatedly, whether Hindus should abandon the Faridgang and Haemchar areas altogether and endeavour to find permanent sanctuary elsewhere. There are large numbers of refugees at Faridgang, Chandpur and Comilla. At Faridgang, on the 2nd of November, there were about 6000 refugees, huddled on boats and sheltering [illegible] in hutsashore. Many are suffering from Bacillary Dysentry and other diseases. The launch on which I travelled to Chandpur on the 3rd of November, towed boats carrying about 500 refugees proceeding to Chandpur.

8. Police work - I understand that there are difficulties in regard to investigation, arrest, release of accused persons on bail and the institution of cases against the police and military. The police authorities were gravely concerned at accused persons being released on very low bail. There are difficulties in regard to jail accommodation. A much larger police investigation staff will be necessary and some means should be found

to protect police officers from the institution of false cases. I merely mention these matters as they form a part of the general picture. Before I left the district I was informed by the S.P. that 201 cases have been instituted against police personnel and the District Magistrate informed me at Hajiganj that over 100 reports of misconduct in the villages of that thana area by the military personnel had been brought to his notice. When I was at Hajiganj on the 3rd of November I attended a meeting at which Brigadier Thapar, commanding the 161st Brigade addressed a large assembly of Muslims, telling them that the Army was there to assist the Civil authorities and that soldiers would in no circumstances harm Muslim villagers. The opinion of the police authorities is that entirely false cases are being instituted both against Police and military personnel and that this and the disappointing effect of releases on bail might well result in a lowering of morale and keenness of the subordinate ranks of the police force. It was not my function - and wholly irrelevant to the task I was set - to enquire into specific cases of releases on bail, or into the nature and character of the cases instituted against the police and military. It is suggested therefore that facts and figures be obtained from those officers concerned at Chandpur.

9. Facts and figures. -I give below in an annexure the figures I was able to collect from the sources specified. They may please be studied in conjunction with my written reports already submitted. For further understanding the following may be noted :-

Form of "conversion" - No instance of circumcision was brought to my notice. The formula employed was the same through out relevant thanas, namely, (1) compulsion to wear a cap upon which was inscribed "Pakistan". (2) Compulsion to wear a lungi as worn by Muslims (3) Removal of caste marks from the forehead of girls and women, (4) breaking of conch bracelets on the wrists of girls, (5)making Hindus shout Allaho Akbar, (6) slaughtering of cows in the presence of Hindus, (7) making Hindus

recite prayers. When I was at Paikpara, two residents of Kasara, a neighbouring village informed me that even at present Hindus left in the latter village were compelled each day to attend prayers. I saw numerous caps in the possession of Hindus who has been 'converted'.

Abduction :- The term abduction is perhaps a misnomer : a suitable term would be restraint. I found no case in which women had been carried away and had not again been heard off. On the other hand there were numerous instances brought to notice where women and girls had been taken to a homestead of school house in a village and kept there for three to five days. In certain cases it was said that they had been raped during the period of restraint.

Murders - The number of murders is small. In each case I demanded to know the name of the deceased. In two instances I saw human remains, that is, the charred bones of persons who had been murdered and thrown into a blazing hut.

Forced marriage :-No single instance of a forced marriage was brought to my notice, but I was told repeatedly, when in the villages I visited, that even at present demands were being made that Hindu 'converted' girls should marry Muslims.

Marooned families and individuals - It cannot be said that there are any marooned families, in the sense of groups of persons in a village unable to move out on account of a cordon of Muslims. I was told however that boats of refugees, if unescorted, were being stopped by Muslims and turned back after being looted. On my way to Haimarchar Bazar, I was obliged to leave the launch and travel by country boat for over two hours. A part of this journey was up a khal. A short distance from the bazar our progress - was arrested by a barricade across the stream built of banana trees and water hyacinth. It was necessary to cut a channel through the barricade. At that point on the bank I saw numerous little Muslim boys who on seeing the boat approach called out saying that boat was approaching. Hindus are still leaving their

village in large numbers so that it cannot be said that they are marooned.

Identity of assailants during the disturbances :- I endeavoured to discover during my visits to villages if the assailants were persons known in the locality or whether they were hooligans or goondas from elsewhere. I was told almost invariably that the persons concerned were Muslims living either in the villages themselves or in the adjoining villages. When I asked for names they were readily but quickly furnished. I was told that these persons were ordinary Muslim villagers who before the disturbances lived a peaceful, tranquil and quiet life, respected by their Hindu neighbours. The exception is the group of villages including Gupti, Khajuria, Bachatali, Soldhana and Datura. There I was informed that the assailants had come across the border from Noakhali, but it was said that local Muslims had joined them and had joined in burning and looting.

10. The general picture :- I did not visit the areas which were not affected during the disturbances. In the affected villages there is chaos, destruction of homesteads, an absence of any sign of movable property, despondency and apprehension; the few who have remained are anxious to leave. The destruction is so complete that except for sheets of corrugated iron - the looting of which is in progress even at present -nothing remains of the wreckage. The interiors of brick built houses have been burnt out and door and window frames have disappeared in the flames. Large numbers of small personal temple-huts have been burnt out, images have been pulled down and smashed and at least one large and ancient brick-built temple has been looted and desecrated. In some villages I visited the few remaining Hindu inhabitants were living on cocoanuts)daba) bananas (where available) and what is known as kachu. The scene at refugee centres such as that at Faridganj cannot be easily forgotten. People are herded together on boats, men, women and children, structures ashore

are overcrowded, there is sickness and despair. There is no confidence, sense of security and hope for the future, so far as these people think and act.

II. Repatriation - There cannot in my view be any immediate repatriation to affected villages unless the following- or measures of the same character -essentials are fulfilled :-

)a) There must be military posts throughout the area to establish confidence. A few posts here and there with patrols will not suffice. Communications are difficult and transit is so slow that people in one village are not given confidence by the presence of post in another and neighbouring village. Unless there is confidence nothing can be done to restore morale and to begin the process of rehabilitation. (b) Unless the law otherwise provides persons arrested in connection with the disturbances should not be released on bail. There is grave apprehension in the villages and in refugee camps that accused persons released on bail will return to villages and murder complainants and informants. If one of the reasons for release on bail is inadequacy, of jail accommodation, provision should be made immediately for additional jails no matter what may be their temporary character.

(c) There should be an immediate increase of investigating staff in each thana. The personnel should be carefully selected from other districts and known to be reliable. If possible all investigating officers should be persons not in any manner connected with the district of Tippera.The complaint in the villages is that without immediate investigation of cases and arrests offenders are encouraged and a fresh outbreak is inevitably worse than the first.

(d) The judicial machinery should be set in motion as soon as possible. There should be a special procedure provided for the disposal of cases expeditiously.

(e) There should be immediate steps taken to provide dwelling houses to replace those destroyed by fire. Nothing elaborate is

required : there should be sufficient shelter from the elements.

Materials rather than money grants are desirable. Lying in the wrecked homesteads are countless sheets of corrugated iron affected by fires but still useful. Sappers and Miners could do much in a short interval of time. People cannot be expected to return to devastated villages.

(f) Cooking pots, clothing and blankets should be provided.

(g) There should be evidence of proper and adequate distribution of food of fair quality. It is suggested that presidents of union boards should not be entrusted with the distribution unless they have shown by their conduct during the disturbances that they were willing to assist people, regardless of community. People now believe that if they return to their villages they will die of starvation. Food centres may be set up for groups of villages, having regard to communications in the locality. I heard complaints that small boats used for travel between villages and markets were destroyed or stolen during the disturbances. Such small craft should be made available .

(h) More dispensaries should be provided. So many private doctors and kabirajes have lost their stocks of medicines in consequence of looting.

(i) Presidents of unions who did nothing to assist people during the disturbances should be removed.

(j) Civil officers should tour widely. People in villages and refugee camps do not know what is occurring, whether attacks have ceased, whether arrangements have been made for their future safety, housing, feeding and so forth. Rumours are wide spread in the villages causing alarm and apprehension. People want advice and assurance by officers of understanding and sympathy. Everywhere I went, I was asked by the few remaining whether they should stay or evacuate to Chandpur.

(k) Efforts should be made to pursuade the influential and im- the influential and important Hindu residents to return to their homes immediately they can be made for habitation. If they give the lead, others will follow. Efforts should be made to get into

touch with them and they should be made parties to the process of relief and rehabilitation.

(l) People in such refugee centres as Faridganj should be made to help themselves. For example, they should be pursuaded to construct trench latrines, clean the area and so forth. At Faridganj there are many refugee fishermen who have their nets with them. They should be pursuaded to catch fish for the refugees as a whole. They should be kept occupied in order to improve their morale.

(m) A comparatively young, vigorous and keen rehabilitation officer should be appointed (the officer should be a member of the executive branch of the I.C.S., and should have performed the duties of an Additional District Magistrate or should have been a subdivisional officer for at least three years). He should have the rank of an Additional District Magistrate and his duties should be confined to matters arising out of the disturbances. As he should tour extensively and the strain of touring is great he should not be more than fortyfive years of age. The officer appointed should be given wide discretion and powers and should work in close co-operation with the Police and Military in matters affecting security and rehabilitation. He should be given adequate staff - at least one subdeputy collector for each union, an information recording officer (Deputy Magistrate) and clerks. He should supervise as far as possible all work as it proceeds in villages - constant touring and inspection. He should make a complete census of damage as soon as possible with the assistance of his staff and should have no difficulty in facilities in the matter of personal checks on work done. He should not accept statistics furnished by residents of union boards. Adequate transport should be placed at his disposal.

(n) The District Magistrate and S.D.O. should not be burdened with the work of rehabilitation, but should concentrate their efforts on the maintenance of law and order.

12. Haste is essential if the standing crop on Hindu owned land is not to be lost. The same crop appears to be good. As matters stand, there will be no Hindus - except in certain villages - to harvest the crop. The Hindus apprehend that the crop will be reaped in their absence or by force by Muslims and stolen. Even if the crop is reaped, threshing will present a difficulty. There must be threshing floors and dhenkis available. Some scheme may be formulated for having the crop reaped, collected and threshed and grain safely stored, together with the straw, by paid labour at the instance and under the supervision of Government. This will probably require legislation.

13. I have unwittingly omitted in the paragraph dealing with the general policy mention of the condition of the Bhamchar bazar. This was a very large and flourishing bazar, the land being the property of Government. The bazar no longer exists. Nearly all the shops have been destroyed by fire and the wreckage is appalling. When I visited the bazar on the 30th of October, one of the fires was still smouldering. The bazar may well have been destroyed by high explosive missiles from the air.

14. The military are endeavouring to assist the civil authorities as much as possible. The resources in men are very limited, but pickets are being posted over a wide area. From what I saw of the officers I met they are enthusiastic and keen and anxious to assist the people without bias or prejudice.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient servant,

5.11.46.

Sd/- E.S. Simpson.

Village	No. of homesteads before disturbances	No. of huts	No. of homesteads destroyed by fire	No. of huts destroyed by fire	Conversions	Murders	Restraints of women	Looting of huts	Forced marriages
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
THANA FARIDGANJ									
Naikpara	66	530	62	496	150	3	140	all	nil
Khanua	??	(?)	(?)	100	nil	nil	nil	100	nil
Chisanga	17	(?)	14	150	25	nil	nil	nil	nil
Kota	55	350	15	115	50/60	nil	nil	nil	nil
Chatal	19	(?)	(10 (4 Partly	205	70/80	nil	nil	all	nil
West Jayari	5	53	5	52	200	nil	nil	all	nil
Kasinli	7	(?)	5	(?)	300	1	nil	all	nil
Khristanli	100 +	(?)	9?	(?)	200	3	15	all	nil
Chajuria				99	370	5	nil	all	nil
Gati				36	entire	nil	nil	all	nil
Bakatali			1	9	do	nil	nil	all	nil
Dasra			nil	nil	209	nil	nil	4	nil
Sadhana			6	72	175	1	nil	all	nil
Kasia			5	42	nil	nil	nil	25	nil
Barpaika			5	83	150	1	nil	43	nil
Mankhil			1	25	102	nil	nil	all	nil
Mistri			4	43	2000	nil	nil	all	nil
Gobindapur			nil	nil	entire	nil	1 Rape	nil	nil
West Gobindapur			nil	nil	650	nil	nil	all	nil
Chandraghab Roy			(?	11	400	nil	nil	all	nil
Lamua			9	140	300	1	nil	all	nil
Chandumiria				92	600	2	all	225	nil
Bora				140	20	nil	nil	120	nil
Chandanga			4	225	2500	1	nil	4?	nil
West Jornli			1	120					
Chandraghun				400	2500	1	200 Rape	all	nil

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Thana Chandpur									
Krishnapur	200	1400	150	1050	300	nil	n	44	nil
Algi Dumajpur	35	140	10	4	200	nil	n	20	nil
Hemchandpur	20	90	5	1	1000	nil	[illegible]	12	nil
Sirajpur	175	1000	25	12					
Golinda	35	90	4	1	200	nil	nil	al	nil
Bhangulia	12	40	2	1	10	nil	al	al	nil
Manipur-Gazipur	12	50	nil	ni	100	nil	nil	al	nil
Hemchar	110	660	100	60	1500	2	30 Rupees	60	nil
Hannachar	200	1500	25	10	500	1	2	ni	nil
Muhajanpur	60	(?)	35	30	500	nil	nil	al	nil
Char Sadhi	400	(?)	300	(?	6000	6	350 Rupees	al	nil
Bajapur	50	50	31	10	nil	3	nil	ni	nil
Ibrahimpur	60	600	4	4	nil	1	nil	4	nil
Thana Enlagani								10	
Ayuntola	73	135	1	10	25	nil	nil	nil	nil
Harin	14	112	3	65	nil	nil	nil	[illegible]	nil
Dhumr	11	175	2	37	nil	nil	nil	[illegible]	nil
Soreng	16	160	4	19	250	nil	nil	160	nil
Serdir	12	65	6	45	30	nil	nil	65	nil
Nischintapur	6	80	1	16	250	nil	nil	1	nil

Thana Chandpur

Hemchar ... 227 shops and 12 dwellings burnt out and destroyed. 2 murders

Bajapti ... 2 bazars - each containing 40 shops and 2 dispensaries looted but not destroyed by fire.

Algi Bazar ... 30 huts looted.

Thana Faridganj

Asta Brahmanam ... 7 Hindu shops and 1 Dispensary entered and looted.

Statement by the Police [illegible] Damages, Murders, etc., as extracted from first information reports .-

na	No. of villages affected	No. of houses looted or burnt	Murders
agram	13	29	nil
anj	5	1.	nil
hang	1	nil	nil
ina	1	1	nil
ganj	70	92?	11
pur	36	65?	12
	1	nil	nil
agar	1	nil	nil
arampur	4	107	nil
a	1	nil	5
Total	133	1726	28

Total number of persons killed by Police firing ... 37

REPORT DATED 31st OCTOBER 1946 ON DATTAPARA AND KHILPARA RECEIVED FROM SUCHETA KRIPALANI BY ACHARYA KRIPALANI

On the 24.10.46 the Congress President, Acharya Kripalani with Mrs. Kripalani and Dhiren Datta proceeded to Dattapara and Khilpara in Begumganj thana from Chaumohani in a military truck escorted by a section of Rajput Regiment under the command of Capt. Yusuf Ali. The truck halted en route at Begumganj thana and collected the following information:

Vill. Jayag: Entirely Hindu village. 7 or 8 hourses burnt. Local Muslims attacked. Police opened fire on the 12th night. No report of actual casualty. Few Hindus may still be there. This place is 17 miles from P.S.

Vill. Panchagaon: 1 mile west of Jayag on the side of D.B. Road. Whole village consisting of nearly 1,000 huts burnt. On the 12th at 4 or 5 P.M. a mob over 10,000 in number attacked the village. Police picked up villagers, 4 Hindus and 2 Muslims with gunshot wounds. Corpses were seen on the road. Besides this stray cases of murder, arson, looting, conversion in N.W. part of Ranigunj.

Village Govindapur: Arson and murder in 2 or 3 hourses, i.e. of Bhowmik and Jasoda Pal. 12 or 13 persons killed and thrown into the flames. No outrage on married women yet reported, but such matters are not usually reported to the thana by the terrorised Hindus. People are kept in cordon in unions Nos. 1,2,3 and 7. 7,000 females rescured. Unions Nos. 4,5 and 6 partly saved. Demobbed local ex-soldiers participated in the attack. 6 armed persons were arrested at Baragovindapur. All outrages were committed by local men. There was no suggestion of weapons being supplied by any military organisations.

They could go by the truck on the D.B. Road upto Bat-tali, then onward they walked on foot as the branch road to Dattapara had been cut up at 5 places by the goondas. But the road was not as bad as it had been reported to by local Government officials, i.e. Dattapara was not unapproachable.

At Dattapara they learnt that in the main centre of the village no arson or murder had taken place. This is entirely a Hindu colony and the leading family of Guha Roys had some arms with the help of which they were able to hold at bay a huge crowd of nearly 10,000 till the armed police arrived. But in the outskirts of the village Hindu houses had been burnt, money had been extorted as League subscription, idols were destroyed, people were converted forcibly and property looted. They found at the house of Guha Roys (Called Dewanjibari) over 2,500 refugees from this and neighbouring villages. They interviewed several refugees from various villages and obtained written statements extracts from which have already been sent. The refugees are badly in nedd of more food, cloth and medicines. They were all huddled up in as cattle and leading an appalling existence. Most of them had been looted of all their earthly belongings and converted. Some of them showed us the caps that have been distributed in thousands to these new converts with a stamp of Pakistan flag, a map of Pakistan India and the slogan "Pakistan Zindabad". All the caps were made of very good new cloth. It is a wonder how the goondas could obtain so much cloth in these days of stringent cloth control unless there was some powerful central organisation which was helping them.

Khilpara: They then proceeded to Khilpara. Half-way to that village was a spot called Mallikadighirpar where, the local people told us, many outrages had taken place including murders. It was a lonely spot by a high ridge with low paddy fields and thick clusters

of trees ideally suited for ambush and sudden attack. They found some Muslims in an isolated hut some of whom immediately left the hut by the back door on seeing their military escorts. As this looked very suspicious Capt. Yusuf Ali deployed his men. Immediately about a dozen persons rushed out from their hiding places and ran away as fast as they could. This confirmed what the local people told the party. The hut was an outpost of the goondas. On reaching Khilpara, they visited firstly the house of Jegendra Chakravarti which had been burnt and every article plundered away. As the goondas had declared a reward on the head, the owner of the house had run away and was in hiding, while the wife lived all by herself. They offered to take her away but she preferred to remain there. Indra Nath Chakravarty, local schoolmaster from the neighbouring house xxxxx came and gave a graphic account of the attack on the 12th. He said that 7 batches of 200 to 400 men each attacked the village on that day. The first came and demanded subscription for the League and then looted the houses. This was followed by wholesale conversions, the Maoulvis being in the raiding mobs. All the Hindu people in Khilpara were living in abject terror because the goondas were very powerful and kept watch over the locality and did not allow anyone to get out or come in. The bazar had a deserted and empty appearance. All the Hindu shops had been looted. There were 2 or 3 Muslim shops which appeared more like the rendezvous of the goondas than shops. League flags were flying over all the shops. They saw a couple of new huts which had been erected after the riots by the goondas. These they learnt served as their meeting places. The most important house in the village was the one belonging to the Chowdhury family, where about 1500 refugees had taken shelter. Almost all of them had been converted including the Chowdhury family. Here they came across more harrowing tales. They interviewed several of the refugees including the widows of the Chowdhury family of Noakholi, a neighbouring village. They were told that Noakholi and Sonachaka villages had been ravaged still worse. In this family all the men totalling 8 were butchered in the presence of the women, who had later managed to escape to the jungles and remained in hiding for 4 days till they were rescued. Shefali, a young unmarried girl, recounted the horrors of her own experience. As the Muslims were determined to abduct her, she hid in the jungle and lay under the water of the paddy field for 4 days after running away from Priyagopal Babu's house who had given shelter to her thinking that his house was safe as he had been converted. He was murdered 3 or 4 days after for allowing the girl to escape.

COPY OF A PAMPHLET REPORTED TO HAVE BEEN WIDELY DISTRIBUTED IN THE AREA BEFORE THE TROUBLES STARTED.

This is the copy of a circular passed by Mr. Jinnah and the Muslim League Working Committee.

1. All Muslims of India should be prepared to die for Pakistan.

2. With Pakistan established whole of India should be conquered.

3. All non-Muslims of India should be converted to Islam.

4. The Muslim Kingdom thus established should join hands with the Anglo-Americans for the exploitation of the whole world.

5. One Muslim must get rights of five Hindus, ie. he must be equal to five Hindus.

6. With the establishment of Pakistan the following action must be taken:-

   (a) All factories, shops and establishments owned by Hindus should be burnt, destroyed and looted and where possible the booty should be distributed among Muslims.

   (b) All Muslim Leagurers should carry weapons in defiance of order.

   (c) All temples and places of worship to be destroyed.

   (d) Hindus will be murdered gradually and their population to be reduced.

   (e) All Nationalist Muslims must be killed by Muslim League Secret Police "Gestapo" if they do not join the League.

   (f) Muslim spies should be posted in every village and hamlet of India for keeping Muslim League of Action informed of all anti-Pakistan activities.

   (g) All Congress leaders must be murdered one by one for speedy achievement of Pakistan.

   (h) Congress Paper offices must be destroyed along with printing machinery for stopping nationalist propaganda

   (i) Muslims should never be allowed to work under Hindus in Army, Navy, Govt. services or Private firms.

   (j) Muslim League National Guards must sabotage the work of the Congress Ministries and Muslim League Press must invent stories of Muslim oppression by Congress Govt. and give widest possible publicity.

   (k) Kasachi, Bombay, Madras, Vizagapatam, Goa, Calcutta should be destroyed by Muslim League National Guards by December 1946.

(l) Financial help is given to the Muslim League by Nizam of Hyderabad, Communists of India, few Europeans, Khajas, Nawab of Bhopal, a few Anglo-Indians, Parsis, Christians on condition that in a Pakistan India they will have preferential treatment.

Bengal, Sind and the Punjab have been chosen as places for the manufacture of all arms, weapons for waging Pakistani war. Weapons should be despatched to the secret addresses of the Muslim National Guards for distribution among Muslims in Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi, Karachi, Peshawar and other centres.

(m) All sections of the Muslims must carry minimum equipment of weapon - at least pocket knives and use them at all possible moments on Hindus for their total annihilation.

(n) All vehicles and other means of tranport should be used for offensive purposes.

(o) All Hindu women and girls should be abducted, raped and converted to Islam from October 8th, 1946.

(p) Hindu culture should be wiped out.

(q) Muslim Leaguers must be cruel at all times while dealing with the Hindus and boycott them specially economically in all possible ways.

(r) No Muslim should buy anything from Hindu dealers. All Hindu firms should be boycotted. Muslims growing crops must not sell to Hindus to hasten their extermination. All Muslim Leaguers should carry out the instructions and be prepared for launching jehad in all parts of India by the 15th September, 1946.

I came to Dattapara today and am st ying on here for a few days and willgo to other interior villages from tomorrow. After talking with the Military people and also all other sections who are trying to bring down things to normal, I feel the following things are urgently necessary to cope with the situation, and I would like Bapu and Jawaharlal to put pressure on the Viceroy, if needed, for this:-

(1) Military must be authorized to make arrests and the best thing would be to declare Marshal Law. I say this as the Military cannot function properly unless they are given full autority. Even on the 25th and 26th murders have taken place within 6 miles of this place. Yesterday, five men escorted by an armed police started for Anandipur. The armed guard was overpowered and it is reported that five men were killed. The Captain in-charge of this Unit had spent the whole day and had brought back a doubtful person with him but he could not brace anything of the five men. He will carry on his investigation tomorrow too. He is very good and I think he will get to the root of the thing. I give details of the incident to show that even in the presence of the Military in this area, goondaism is not entirely checked, so I naturally conclude that the following things are needed:

(a) More power for the Military.

(b) More regiment.

(c) Removal of the S.P.

(d) Immediately large scale of arrests of miscreants.

Re. (c) and (d): Today one Mr. Gupta, an I.C.S. officer, turned up here. He has been deputed by the Government to tour this area and submit a report. I told him all these. He was accompanied by the S.P. As soon as I talked about the arrest of the goondas, the S.P. said he cannot do it till more police are posted here and that it will take some time to collect more police from the other districts for this purpose. I said that the Army is now free. If no police is available they will have to wait 10/15 days for that.

We are asking the people to go back to their villages but they cannot go back unless they are safe and they cannot feel safe so long the murderers are roaming about. I told both these officers that this delay would only give an opportunity to the goondas to escape and to remove the looted goods so that no evidence will remain. From my experience I have seen that the people will not give evidence against the miscreants till they feel safe. I did not at all like the attitude of the S.P. after we heard complaints against him. It is the man in whom the entire Hindu community has no confidence.

(5) The so-called Defence Committee set up by the S.P. consists mostly of such people who themselves are goondas. They terrorise the people and pretend to keep a watch at night. Many self-appointed Defence Committees have also come into existence which are extorting money from the people as payment for the watch they are keeping.

(6) The ID is coming on the 5th Nov mber. On that day thousands of so-called converted Muslims will be compelled to kill cows and a general uprising is also expected. They are threatening the remaining leading Hindu houses and all of them rightly or wrongly fear that they will be killed. The Military that is now posted in this area cannot possibly reach any village. Before the 5th, the goondas must be rounded up and the Military strength increased. This is absolutely urgent. The Military is now patrolling mainly the D.B. roads. Murders and other things are taking place in the interior places. You know how inaccessible these interior villages are. Even when an incident is taking place within a mile or two, it is impossible for the Military patrol to know or to do anything till the thing is over. The only remedy is for rounding up of goondas without any further delay.

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(7) The next trouble is food. Government rice reaches Refugee Camp but thousands of people are yet in their houses who have saved their lives by conversion but have been looted of all their earthly belongings. Richest Hindu homes are now paupers. Some arrangements should be made to (i) give their daily dole at their houses, (ii) supply them rice at cheap rates. But the distribution of the above must not be given to Muslims, as Hindus will not go to them as they are too terrified. This distribution should be made either through some private agency or through the Military.

(8) Some arrangements should be made to shift the Hindu families from those villages where there are 3/4 families. The Hindus can exist in East Bengal only if they are kept in big groups and are given facilities to defend themselves.

I posted from Choumohani two copies of one report to Calcutta (c/o S. N. Ghosh) and to Delhi. I do not know if you will get that; so I send the third copy through this bearer; along with it you will find a copy of curious document that some people gave me at Choumohani. I am told that this pamphlet was distributed in this area some time before the troubles started. I cannot vouch for it. I am sending it for what it is worth. Handing over one copy of this for military investigation. I feel this is a very serious and important paper and so I am sending it. Will try to get more information regarding it.

P.S. Another murder and some looting took place on the 25th and 26th at a place nearby called Babuchar. The matter has been reported to the Begumganj Thana.